

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES \$53,300 RURAL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE GRANT

Sparta Community Development Organization, Inc. received \$53,300 in a Mock Check ceremony August 31, 2006, at the Sparta Industrial Park. The USDA Rural Development Grant funds will finish infrastructure improvements to the Industrial Park. Initial Grant funds of \$99,595 provided last year along with these additional funds will help benefit expansion and additional employment for two private businesses by saving 2 jobs and creating 8 new jobs. The Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBE) program allows USDA to finance and facilitate the development of small private enterprises.

"Today's announcement is great news for Sparta. The expansion of the Industrial Park is critical to attracting new businesses and creating jobs in this community," said Senator Kit Bond who secured the initial federal funds for the Industrial Park. "I will continue to work with the USDA and local leaders in our efforts to improve the quality of life for families in Missouri communities."

Congressman Roy Blunt said, "Partnerships between local government and federal agencies can bring great benefits to small communities. I applaud the efforts of Sparta community leaders and the help they received from Rural Development, which will save existing jobs and create new job opportunities. Developing infrastructure—streets, water and sewer lines—is essential to the success of any commercial enterprise and often difficult for smaller communities to afford. This is a great example of making the federal government work for the citizens of Sparta."

Greg Branum, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development said, "Special thanks are extended to our federal elected officials including U.S. Senators "Kit" Bond and Jim Talent plus U.S. Representative Roy Blunt for making available federal monies for funding this kind of project providing essential services for the community." Branum added, "This kind of assistance mirrors USDA Rural Development's mission and President Bush's initiative of being committed to the future of rural communities."

Vice President Dan Leyland expressed his appreciation, "This project fits into the community's goal of creating jobs and capital investments for Sparta and also to create sustainable economic development opportunities for Christian county. The board would like to thank everyone for their hard work and support."



Left to Right: Reggie Mitchum, Board Member; Jerry Finley, Rural Development Area Manager; Steve McIntosh, Field Representative for Congressman Blunt; Dan Leyland, Vice President; Ken Lupton, President; Don Thompson, Board Member; Debbie Thompson, Board Member; Stacy Burks, District Office Director for Senator Bond; Chris Stone, Field Representative for Senator Talent; Lynette Bilyeu, Rural Development Manager.

Anyone seeking more information about this or any other USDA Rural Development program may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/> or by contacting Lynette R. Bilyeu, Rural Development Manager, at 1786 S. 16th Ave, Suite 103, Ozark, MO, 65721, or by calling (417) 581-3905 extension 4 or by email to lyn.bilyeu@mo.usda.gov

“Committed to the future of rural communities.”

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